



Health and Wellness and Occupational Therapy Advocacy for Cal State LA Students



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The Mobility Center

The Mobility Center is a service-learning based therapeutic exercise program located off-campus of CSULA. Our students gain real-world, hands-on experience working with clients from our East Los Angeles community and beyond. Our goal is to educate the next generation of rehabilitation professionals and provide low-cost exercise programs to people who lack access to traditional rehabilitation services ("About the Mobility Center," 2019, para. 1).

CSULA undergraduate college students have the unique opportunity to work with clients of various diagnoses and abilities, under the supervision of trained staff. Students assess the goals and needs of their clients as well as create individualized training programs.

Students at the Mobility Center help clients heal and recover in multiple ways, addressing the clients' quality of life by utilizing exercise integration and meaningful activities.

Needs Assessment

Phase I: Community site mentor's concerns:

- Students excelling in their service-learning skills; however, not in their health and wellness.
- There is a gap in what the curriculum offers to the students.

Phase II: Student mental health concerns:

- Overwhelming amounts of stress
- Lack of time management and structure
- Decreased or absent physical activity
- No sleep routine, or lack of sleep.

Background

Undergraduate Student Stress

- Students are expected to handle academic stressors that involve 'juggling' the responsibilities of this phase of life and more general university-related stressors (Govender et al., 2015).
- Students who do not have proper stress management and adaptive skills may experience psychological distress such as anxiety or depression (Chang et al., 2017).

Occupational Therapy Interventions

- Health and wellness interventions in an undergraduate program setting may contribute to achieving occupational balance and effectively manage the rigors of academia.
- Occupational therapy can equip students to learn strategies to manage worries and work to change and improve routines that promote healthy and meaningful lives.

Theoretical Framework

- The Eight Dimensions of Wellness (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMSHA], 2016) facilitated a well-rounded health and wellness education program that promoted student health and wellness.
- A wellness approach allows occupational therapists to be true to their roots of client-centered, occupation-based care (Krupa, 2014; Swarbrick, 1997).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the capstone project was to increase the Mobility Center students' understanding of their their health and wellness, applying the concepts to enhance their health and wellness skills for day to day living and to empower the students to navigate the rigors of their education.

Learning Objectives

1.) The occupational therapy student utilized their role to facilitate the development of hands-on skills of Mobility Center students and incorporation of wellness activities into therapeutic exercise sessions

2.) Develop mental health learning activities/lecture(s) to incorporate into existing curriculum

3.) The occupational therapy student utilized their role to advocate for the occupational therapy profession and educate on a variety of practice areas.

Implementation Plan

Weeks 1 to 6	Rapport building with staff and students, treating and assisting in client exercises sessions
Weeks 7 to 8	Wrote education-based program, researched interventions, and formulated Neurorehabilitation lecture Initiated pilot program
Weeks 9 to 16	Kinesiology 4420: Practicum in Rehabilitation and Therapeutic Exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online education modules—1x/week• Student wellness groups—2x/week• Client exercise therapy sessions Kinesiology 4365: Neurorehabilitation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participated in lectures and labs• Guest lecture "Mental and Emotional Aspects of CVA"

Program Topics

1. Health and Wellness
2. Student Mental Health
3. Eight Dimensions of Wellness
4. Coping Strategies: Part I and II
5. Mindfulness
6. Sleep
7. Overview of OT in Mental Health

Scholarly Deliverables

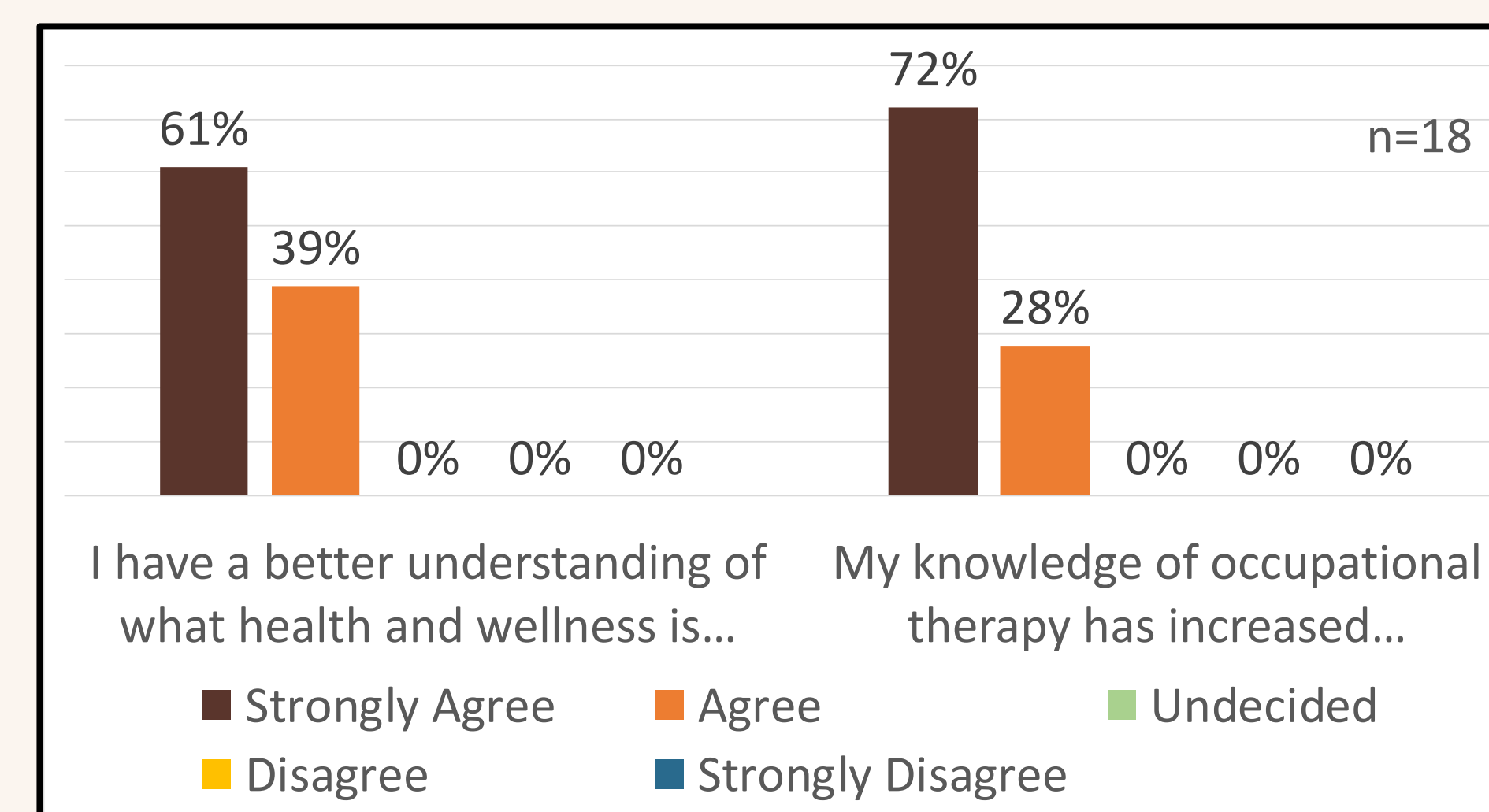
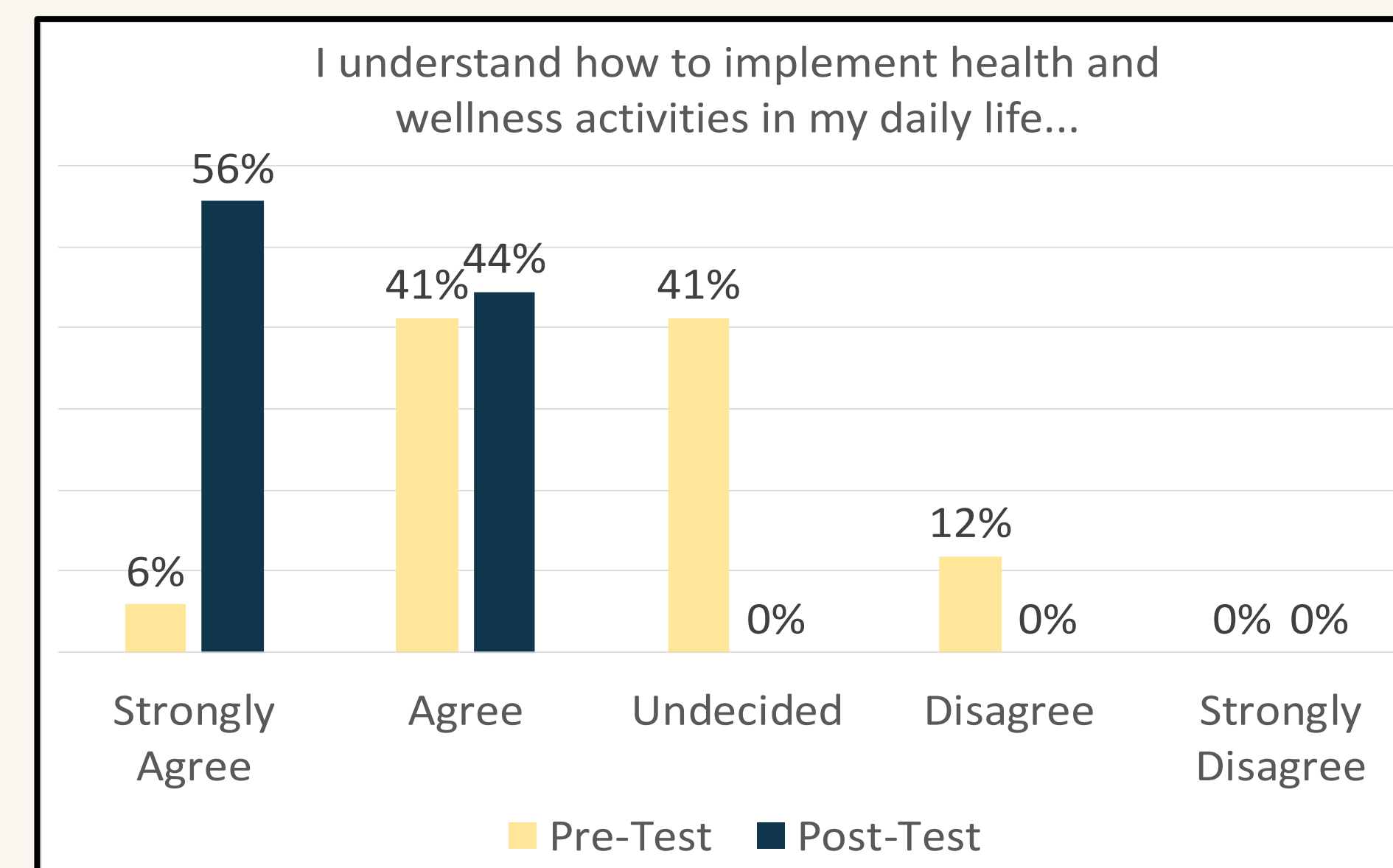
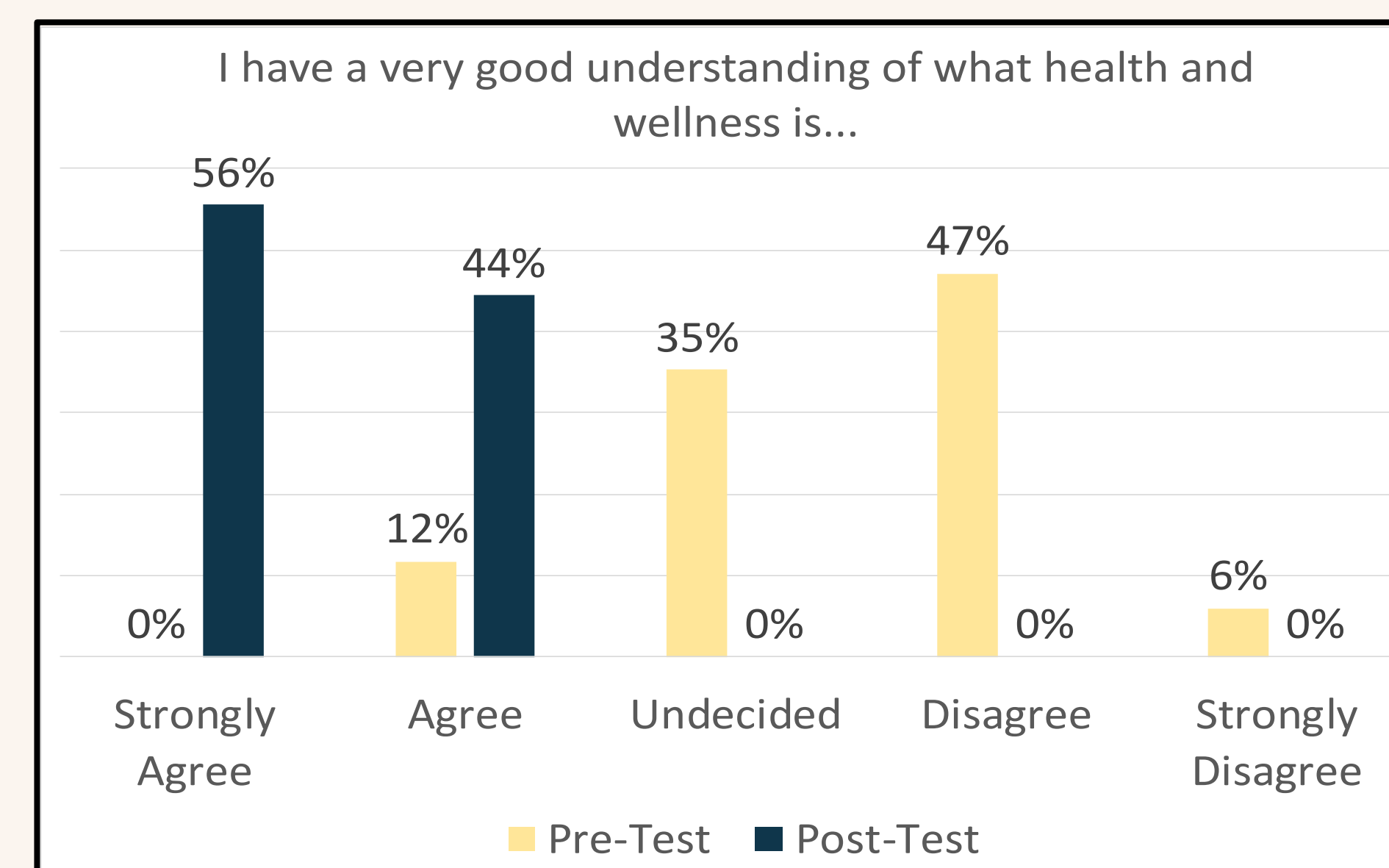
1.) Weekly check-in with community site mentor regarding occupational therapy student/Mobility Center students' client sessions.

2.) Creation of an electronic folder with digital files for student curriculum, including group protocol/guidelines.

3.) Guest lecture in Kinesiology 4365: Neurorehabilitation focusing on mental health in the CVA population. Also, including digital files for students and faculty.

Data Analysis

Five-point Likert scale assessment tool
Pre-test (n=17), post-test (n=18)



Discussion

Undergraduate college students' understanding of their mental health and their ability to address their mental health increased following an occupational therapy education-based program.

- 100% (n=18 students) strongly agree or agree with the statement, I have a very good understanding of what health and wellness is. Which indicates
- 44% (n=8 students) strongly agree and 56% (n=9 students) agree with the statement, my knowledge of occupational therapy has increased.

Overall data analysis shows:

- Students had a better understanding of health and wellness
- Students had a better understanding of how to utilize wellness activities (i.e. stress management, coping strategies)
- Students knowledge of OT had increased

The findings of this health and wellness education-based program suggest that occupational therapists have a significant role in mental health promotion for undergraduate college students.

Implications

Occupational therapy practitioner considerations for undergraduate college student population.:

- Produce skilled mental health promotion and management groups to improve occupational participation and performance.
- Provide individual skilled occupational therapy sessions to develop problem-solving techniques and health promotion interventions.
- Proceed to advocate for the essential role of occupational therapy in the treatment of undergraduate college student mental health..

References

Available upon request

Acknowledgement

Thank you to the Mobility Center students for their transparency and vulnerability throughout the capstone project. Your experiences show the value of addressing undergraduate college students' mental health.

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